Name of Project	Outlay for 1998-99	Current status
(vi) Peddapally-Karimnagar-Nizamabad	1 Rs. 7.00 crs.	Work is being done in phases. In the first phase Peddapally-Karimnagar has been taken up. Earthwork and bridges are in progress and the work is presently targeted for completion by 31-3-2000 subject to availability of resources.

Concession to disabled persons

599. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of changes made in the existing system for granting concession to disabled persons; and

(b) the reasons for modifying the existing system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) On receipt of complaints regarding misuse of concession to disabled persons and also to streamline the procedure, the certificates for grant of concession to Orthopaedically Handicapped/Paraplegic, Blind, Deaf & Dumb and Mentally Retarded persons were revised in May 1998 and acceptance of certificates in old proforma was stopped from 1.1.1999. The major changes made are provision for photograph & address of the disabled person on the certificate and provision of registration number of the Doctor issuing the certificate. Besides, the period of validity of certificate for orthopaedically handicapped/paralegic persons was rationalised and the period of validity of certificates for others was increased from three years to five years.

Vacancies under Khurdha Road Division

600. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of posts are lying vacant under Khurdha Road Division in East Coast Railway;

(b) if so, the vacancy position as on date in Group A, B, C, and D;

(c) the steps taken to fill up these vacancies, particularly Group C and D; and

(d) the details of steps taken to bring about reforms in the recruitment procedures, particularly for Group 'D' candidates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) The vacancy position in Khurdha Road Division is as under:—

		Sanctioned strength	Vacancies
Group 'A'	& 'B'	83	03
Group 'C'		9490 7900	1105
Group 'D'			102

(c) Filing up of vacancies is a continuous process. As per standing instructions, the vacancies in essential categories are required to be filled up promptly. Action has accordingly been initiated by the Railway to place indents on Railway Recruitment Board for recruitment against direct recruitment quota vacancies in Group 'C, to conduct selections/suitability tests/trade tests to fill up the remaining Group *'C'* vacancies by promotion and to finalise pending cases of compassionate appointments and regularisation of substitutes against Group 'D' posts.

(d) The steps taken to streamline the recruitment procedure in the recent past include revamping of Railway Recruitment Boards, discontinuing the earlier practice of associating non-official members belonging to SC/ST, minority and OBC communities in the Interview Committees constituted for recruitment to Group 'C' and 'D' posts on the Railways and instead providing for association in these Committees of serving Railway Officers of appropriate rank blonging to these communities; procedure for publicity of employment notices in the Employment News in addition to such Notices being issued to the Employment Exchanges, recognised associations of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, etc. The steps taken by the Railway include processing of applications by use of computers; conducting of objective type written tests by use of one plus one carbonles answer sheet system and physical fitness tests for Group 'D'.

Development projects of Railways

601. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of development projects initiated by Railways during 1998-99;

(b) the number of rolling stocks, passenger creches, etc. added during 1998-99, Zone-wise;

(c) the details of new passenger amenities created during the same period; and

(d) if answers to (a) to (c) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Touts at New Delhi Railway Station

602. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Pioneer dated 28th January, 1999, under the heading "Touts cash in on Railways computer trip";

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard;

(c) whether Government are aware that a large number of touts function at New Delhi Railway Station almost daily and fleece the prospective travellers; and

(d) if so, how many persons have been booked during the last six months?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE